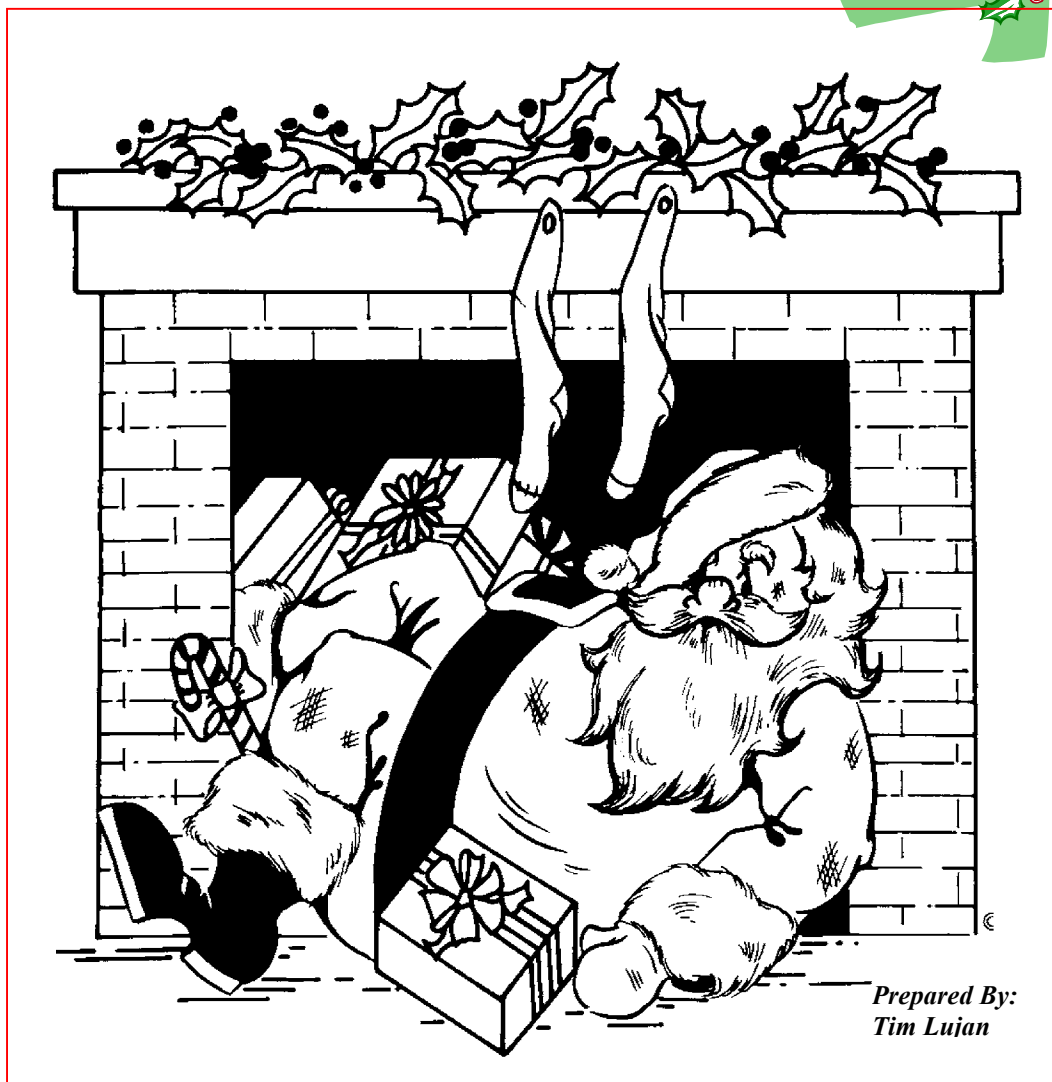


USAF ACADEMY

Happy Holidays



*Prepared By:
Tim Lujan*

Under This Tree:

- From the Director
- Staying Warm in Winter's Cold
- Tips for Cold Weather Safety
- Winter Workout Tips
- Tree & Decorations
- Home Safety
- Fireworks
- Let's Have a Party
- Holiday Travel
- Let it Snow!



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL PERSONNEL

6 Nov 00

FROM: HQ USAFA/SE

SUBJECT: Winter Holiday Safety Awareness

The winter holiday season is almost upon us. The holidays are a great time to give thanks, appreciate family and friends and to reflect on the past and upcoming New Year. As joyous as the season is, we must remember to keep our guard up when it comes to mishap prevention. The Academy has not had a fatal mishap during the winter holiday season since November 1996. I challenge everyone to continue their prevention efforts so that the positive trend might continue.

One area of concern is holiday travel. Many of us will "hit the road" to be with family and friends in other locations. Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination. Do not drink and drive and always be aware of "the other guy." Keep an eye on constantly changing weather and road conditions.

If hosting a party, be a good host and be aware of the consumption of alcohol by your guests. If some folks do overindulge, ensure designated drivers are available or provide accommodations for them to "sleep over".

When decorating, ensure all decorations are fire retardant/fire resistant. Lights should be UL (Underwriter's Laboratories) approved. Keep fragile decorations and tinsel away from small children and pets. If using a real tree, water it frequently to keep it from drying out and becoming a fire hazard.

To help you from becoming a holiday statistic, we have prepared a holiday safety package that highlights some of the seasonal hazards that many of us will encounter. Please use this information to brief your family and friends to ensure a safe holiday season.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication to the USAFA Mishap Prevention Program. Please feel free to contact your unit safety representative or the safety office at any time with any safety concern or suggestion. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

//signed//

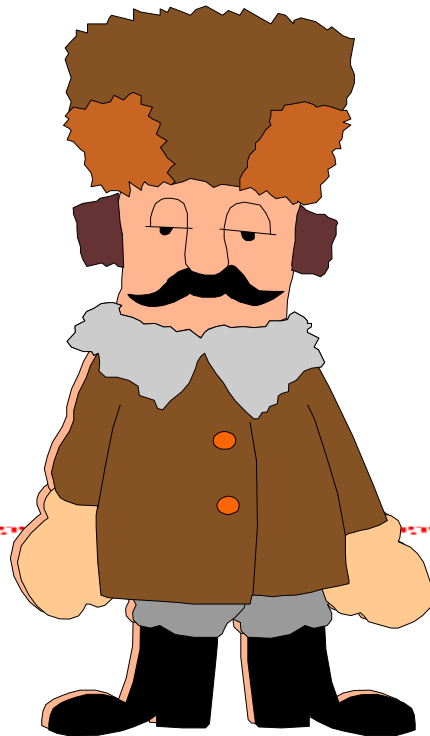
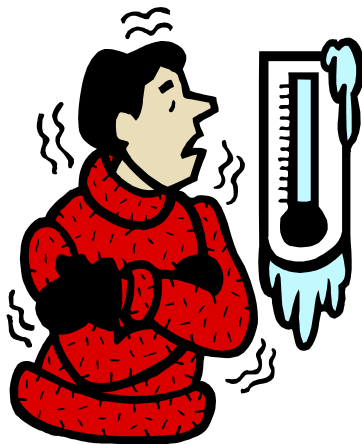
WILLIAM A. TURNER Lt Col, USAF
Director of Safety

Staying Warm in Winter's Cold

It's surprising how many people either don't know or don't heed the warnings about dressing appropriately for the icy cold winter weather. Given the right combination of weather conditions and individual circumstances, frostbite and hypothermia can occur rather quickly.

How to Dress Appropriately

- Layers are the key to keeping warm. Wear several layers of loose-fitting garments, preferably wool.
- Coats or outer garments should be made of a tightly-woven fabric and should be water-repellant if you're going to be out in snow or rain. If your coat has a hood, so much the better. Your body's biggest source of heat loss is through the head. A warm scarf around your neck will help greatly.
- Your nose, cheeks, and ears can get frostbitten fairly easily if it's cold enough, so keep them all covered when you're going to be out in bitter weather for more than a few minutes.
- Thick wool socks and sturdy, lined boots will keep your feet cozy and warm. Bring an extra pair of socks in case yours get wet. Once the snow and ice are on the ground, forget about fashionable footwear. Cover your feet in warm boots with little or no heels and lots of good, gripping traction on the sole.
- Children become oblivious to the cold when they are out playing in the snow. Dress them accordingly, and make sure they know to come in and change if their clothes or socks get wet.
- Snow's glare can intensify sunlight. Wear sunglasses that block out UV (ultraviolet) rays.



Tips for Cold Weather Safety

A little bit of savvy and a few precautions will get you and your family safely through the cold of winter. Unless you live some place where the mercury never drops below freezing, you should prepare for the frigid possibilities.

- **Blackouts!** Winter storms may knock out the power and cut you off for awhile. Lay in supplies of flashlights, batteries, nonperishable food, a manual can opener, portable radio, warm blankets or sleeping bags. Flashlights and battery operated lamps are safer than candles. If you take prescription medications, have an extra supply on hand.



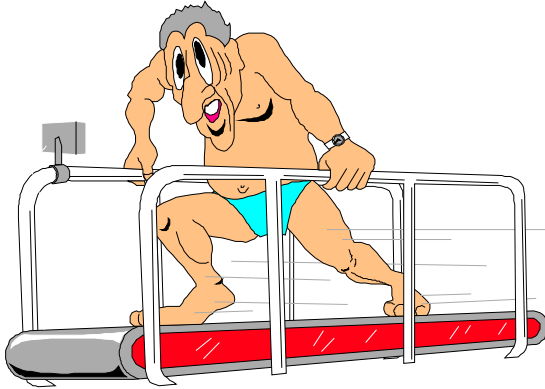
Many people lose their heat source when the electricity is out, so plan for how you will stay warm. If it is a fireplace, have dry wood ready and accessible. Be extra cautious with kerosene and other portable heaters. Place them where they will not get knocked over and well ventilated.

- **Winterize Your House.** Your home should be well-insulated, with weather-stripping where needed. Insulate pipes that might freeze and drain standing water from outdoor faucets.
- **Dress Warmly.** See "*How to Dress Appropriately.*"
- **Winterize the Car.** Have your car thoroughly serviced before winter arrives. Have the mechanic check everything from brakes to wiper blades. If you spend a considerable amount of time in your car, stock it with supplies, including chains, a flashlight, matches, extra clothes and blankets, jumper cables, food and water. Keep your gas tank full, to avoid water condensation.
- **Driving.** Try to avoid driving in a blizzard. Watch for ice on the road and learn how to handle the car should you start to skid. Do not tempt fate. When driving conditions are horrendous, pull over and wait. If you are stranded in the car, tie a piece of cloth to the antenna. Run the engine 10 minutes per hour, but crack open a window and keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow.
- **Check on Your Neighbors.** Call or visit people who are elderly or disabled and living alone.
- **Listen to the Weather Report.** It helps to know if a big storm's coming.
- **Snow blowers.** Do not let children play nearby. They can be injured by flying rocks or chunks of ice or by slipping in front of the rotating blades.



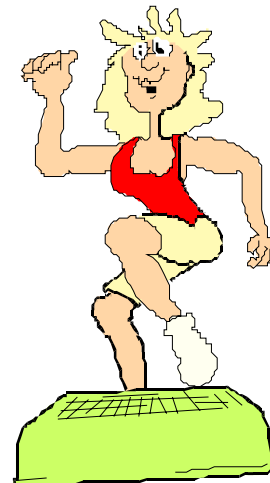
Winter Workout Tips

Much as you might like to blame the weather for your extra winter weight, there is no direct link between cold weather and increased body fat. If you are toting around some extra pounds, they are probably from a combination of holiday overindulgence and lack of exercise.



Your exercise schedule does not have to suffer in winter. When the weather is cold, try to workout inside. If running, walking or biking is a must in your exercise regimen, then go for it - with these precautions:

- **Warm Up Inside** -- Warm up indoors, for at least five minutes, to get your blood flowing and your muscles warm before you hit the chill. Alternatively, do an extended warm-up outdoors, while you are still dressed warmly in all your layers.
- **Shoes** -- Good traction is essential to safely navigate patches of ice and snow. Some running shoes are more suitable for cold weather. Check with a specialty store to learn which shoes are best for your area.
- **Keep Dry** -- If your feet get wet, go home and change. Ditto for all other garments. Wet clothes could chill your body and cause hypothermia, a dangerous lowering of body temperature.
- **Ears, Nose, Fingers, Toes** -- Protect your extremities from frostbite. In numbing cold weather, wear mittens, extra socks or super-thick socks, and a scarf or face mask. A thin layer of petroleum jelly will help protect exposed skin on your face.
- **Hats On** -- Lots of heat escapes from your head. Keep your hat on during the entire workout. If you get warm and need to lighten up, remove layers, but not the hat.
- **Clothes** -- A vigorous workout should warm you up, so dress as if it is somewhat warmer than it is. But don't overdo it in either direction. Dress in several layers and then peel them off as necessary, depending on how hot you get and how much you sweat. The layer closest to your skin should be made of wool or some thermal-type material that wicks moisture away from the skin. The outer layer should be a jacket that is water and wind-proof but still breathable.
- **Drink Up** -- You can become dehydrated in winter. Drink lots of water.
- **Watch Out!** -- Watch out for ice, slush and puddles. Avoid biking or running on icy streets, where you or a car could skid out of control and collide.
- **Check With Your Doctor** -- Cold weather exercise may not be advised for people with asthma, heart disease or other conditions.



Oh Christmas Tree

One of the staples of the holiday season is a beautifully decorated Christmas tree. Some folks prefer the ease of an artificial tree while others enjoy the smell of a fresh cut pine tree. No matter your choice, there are certain precautions that you must follow when using each tree.

- When selecting an artificial tree, select a model that is fire retardant/fire resistant.
- If the tree has a built-in electrical system, it should carry the UL (Underwriter's Laboratories) marker.

If you select a live tree, it should be deep green in color and have a strong scent of pine.

- Make sure the needles are attached firmly to the twigs and that the needles can be bent without breaking. This ensures a recently cut tree, fresh and not dried out. If the needles fall off the tree easily the tree is already too dry.
- When setting the tree up for display, cut about 2 inches off of the trunk and mount it in a sturdy, water holding stand.
- Keep the tree supplied with an adequate amount of water to keep it from drying out.
- Never set the tree close to heating sources such as registers, radiators or fireplaces.
- Remove the tree from the home when it has dried out.



Decorations

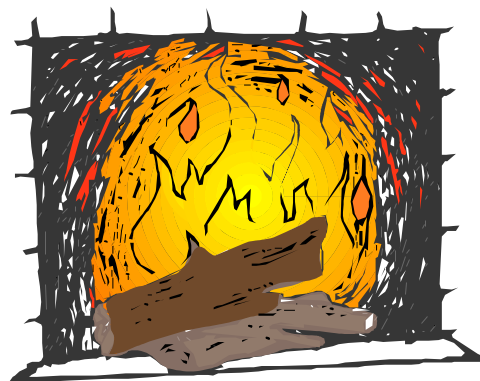


- Inspect all decorations before placing them on the tree.
- Ensure all decorations are fire retardant or fire resistant.
- Use only lighting sets which bear the UL marker.
- Inspect the light strings and cords for fraying, bare wire, loose connections and broken sockets.
- Ensure items such as tinsel and fragile, glass bulbs are placed high enough on the tree to prevent small children and pets from coming into contact with them.



Home Safety

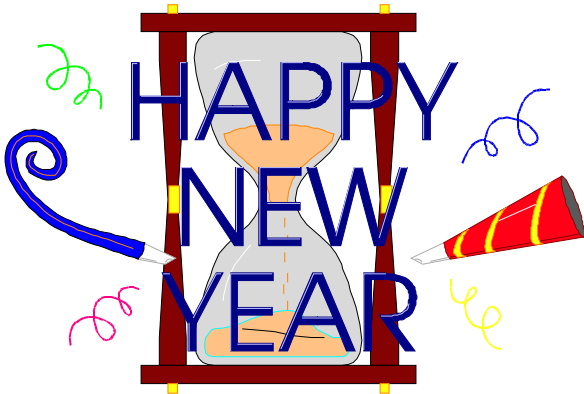
- Install smoke detectors or new batteries in the ones you have and TEST them.
- Use only outdoor lights outside your home.
- Examine light strings each year, discard worn ones.
- Fasten the bulbs securely and point the sockets down to avoid moisture build up.
- Connect no more than three strands together.
- Never use indoor extension cords outside.
- Avoid overloading wall outlets and extension cords.
- Keep outdoor electrical connectors above ground and out of puddles and snow.
- Unplug light string before replacing a bulb. Review the original package to verify proper wattage and voltage.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree, use colored spotlights.
- Make sure trees hung with lights are not touching power lines.
- When using candles, place them a safe distance from combustibles.
- Place candles in sturdy containers. Remember, hot wax burns kids.
- Extinguish candles prior to going to bed.
- Dispose of fireplace ashes into a metal container until cold.



- After parties, check around and under sofa and chair cushions for smoldering cigarettes. (Provide lots of ash trays)
- Install at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home.
- Have an operable fire extinguisher readily available.

FIREWORKS Safety Tips

Prepared By The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)



Fireworks and celebrations go together, especially during the New Year. But fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. That's why the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and its national and state partners strongly recommend:

LEAVE FIREWORKS TO THE PROFESSIONALS!

But if fireworks are legal where you live and you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water in case of a malfunction or fire.



Let's Have A Party

Parties are not a once a year activity but more parties are given during the holiday season than any other time.

- If you are hosting a party have some non-alcoholic beverages available for your non-drinking guests.
- Have plenty of food readily available for guests to nibble on.
- Ensure you have designated drivers available for guests who have had "too much to drink".

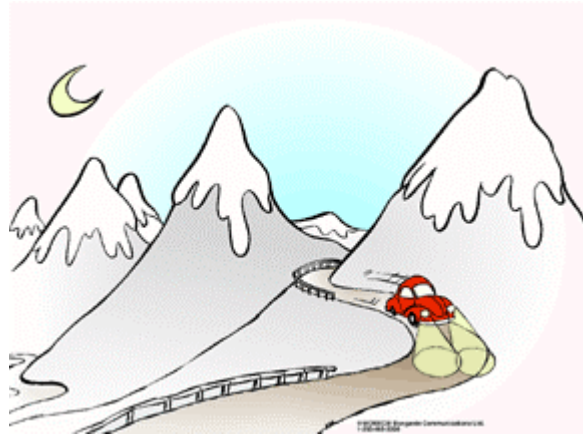
If designated drivers are not available, have provisions available for your guest to "sleep it off" or arrange for them to take a cab.

Plan Ahead to Avoid Frustrating Travel This Holiday Season, AAA Advises

To make the most of this holiday season, AAA suggests planning ahead to avoid common holiday travel pitfalls. "When you take a holiday, add the threat of bad weather and throw in 25 to 35 million motorists, you get a recipe for frustration," said Mark L. Edwards, managing director of AAA Traffic Safety. "With some advance planning, the season can be much more enjoyable."

AAA offers these tips for safe and happy holiday auto travel:

- Leave early, stay late. If possible, leave a day earlier than normal and return a day early or a day late. You can avoid wasting time in traffic and enjoy more time with family and friends.
- Plan ahead. Know your route and have an alternate plan in case of heavy traffic. Also make sure your vehicle is in top condition and carry a vehicle safety kit.
- Take your time. The current land speed record is 733 miles-per-hour. Don't try to break it on the way to grandma's. It is better to plan extra time and arrive safely.
- Take a 15- to 20-minute break every few hours. Stop at a safe rest area and stretch your legs. Also, drink plenty of fluids.



speed limit.

- Bring activities. Children's attention spans are shorter than adult's, so they quickly lose interest when traveling. Pack some special snacks and favorite toys to keep them busy. Try a recorded story or sing-along tape.
- Don't eat and run. After the third helping of stuffing, take a walk to get the blood flowing again. Better yet, take a long nap in your father-in-law's recliner before your return trip.
- Always **BUCKLE UP** and obey the

ALPINE SKIING

Let It Snow

In early 1998, downhill skiing injuries claimed the lives of both Michael Kennedy and Sonny Bono. Neither wore a helmet, so we'll never know if one would have helped, but when you're going fast and with only clothes for protection, a helmet can be your best friend.

Called for good reason "Brain Buckets" these helmets weigh less than a pound. In downhill skiing -- as in other sports -- they are slow to catch on. Sadly, young people seem especially reluctant to smash their hair with a -- "ugh" -- helmet. Maybe the people who value their brains most need to set the trend. If you're just starting out, ski lessons are priceless. You can learn more in one hour of instruction than several days of experimentation on your own.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING.

Cross-country skiing is a terrific way to enjoy the wild open spaces. As you quietly move through the magic of snow-covered parks or forests, you'll be amazed at the creatures that may be looking back at you. Cross-country skiing is strenuous. There's no gravity pulling you down a hill (except for the occasional times you find a hill to glide down), so your legs and arms are doing a lot of work. It's wise to start out on a short trail and gradually build your distance. Again, lessons make a huge difference. You don't need a pro, just a well-seasoned veteran of the sport. Equipment is much less expensive: skis, poles, a backpack, water, and power snacks like trail mix and protein bars. Clothing is worn in layers, easily shed and carried in the backpack for later on. Wool and new man-made fibers that dry next to your skin first are preferable to cotton.



SNOWBOARDING

Featured in the Olympics, snowboarding combines the excitement of skiing, skateboarding, and surfing.



Much debate goes on between young and skeptical snowboarders and the authorities regarding leashes-- snowboards are a deadly weapon when they escape their owners and take off down hill. Being left in the snow while your skateboard surfs alone can be a mighty embarrassing moment. Better to invest in the leash and the latest bindings. Like downhill skiing, helmets should be a necessity. Avoid snowboarding alone. Although you don't have to worry about sharks when surfing powder, too many young people have died from ending up headfirst in a snow pocket. Taking lessons, using the right equipment, and snowboarding in-groups of two or more can save your life.

SLEDDING

Sledding seems like such free and easy fun, yet every year between 30,000 and 35,000 children in the U.S. wind up in emergency rooms from sledding injuries. Sleds on which children lie down on their stomachs facing the hill headfirst result in head and neck injuries. Toboggan-style sleds most often result in spinal cord injuries. Choose a sled, which can be steered sitting up, preferably, one with metal runners. Plastic sleds, though less expensive and more colorful are more dangerous because they hit every single object on the ground and often cannot be steered. You also need to check out the terrain for obstacles like hidden rocks and tree stumps. The best hill has a long, empty space at the bottom for slowing down and stopping safely after the speed of the run.